REPORT TO THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ON THE COMPLAINTS OF THE INUIT PEOPLE RELOCATED FROM INUKJUAK AND POND INLET, TO GRISE FIORD AND RESOLUTE BAY IN 1953 AND 1955

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DECEMBER 11, 1991

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Kingston, Ontario

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December 1991
D. Soberman

1. INTRODUCTION

This report results from a decision of the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) to review the complaints made in 1990 by Inuit representatives, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC), before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. The complaints are with respect to the relocation, in 1953 and 1955, of a number of Inuit families, principally from Inukjuak on the east coast of Hudson Bay in northern Quebec.

The Committee referred the matter to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). In response to the referral DIAND commissioned a study by the firm of J.F. Hickling Management Consultants. In November 1990, the Consultant's report, along with DIAND's reply to the Inuit complaints, were presented to the Committee. The substance of the response was that the Government of Canada had acted properly with respect to the relocations and would not apologize.

Dissatisfaction with the Consultant's report and DIAND's response prompted ITC to appeal to CHRC. Since the main events occurred in the 1950s -- long before the Canadian Human Rights Act became law and CHRC came into existence -- CHRC concluded that its statutory procedures for investigating complaints did not apply to the situation. However, in January 1991, CHRC made an informal arrangement with ITC and DIAND to conduct a review of the complaints and their surrounding circumstances.

It is helpful, because of the unusual origin and nature of this report, to set out the Mandate for the investigation, as agreed between the CHRC and myself:

> to act as Special Reporter to the Commission to investigate the relocation of the Inuit People from Northern Quebec to the High Arctic and to provide an opinion on the claims of the Inuit regarding the relocation.

Among the more technical aspects, is one specific addition to the Mandate:

> if the contractor and Commission Representative determine it feasible, to explore the possibility of arriving at a conclusion mutually acceptable to the Inuit and DIAND.

The mandate therefore, includes a mediative element, that of trying to reach a resolution of the disagreement between the two sides.

It should be noted that this report is <u>not</u> a formal decision of a tribunal, based on hearing sworn witnesses subject to cross-examination and the reception of documents as exhibits, followed by argument of counsel on fact and law. But neither is it a paper written without regard to the juridical view of evidence and of legal obligations arising from facts that have been established on a balance of probabilities. Rather, it is a report by an independent investigator striving for impartiality and informally employing juridical norms.

Thus, I conceived of my first task as that of listening as carefully and fully as I could to the complainants' concerns and arguments. The next step was to listen to the reply of the other side, by interviewing former and current civil servants, including RCMP officers. I also invited both sides as well as any other interested persons not only to meet with me but also to submit

all relevant documents. While the documents considered in reaching my conclusions have not been subjected to court-like verification procedures, I have no doubt about their validity.

With the written consent of both parties this review began in August 1991. I first travelled to the High Arctic (Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay and Pond Inlet) to interview as many of the Inuit directly involved in the events of the 1950s as was feasible in the time available. A few days later, I made a second trip to Inukjuak, the original home of most of the relocated families, to interview those who had returned from the High Arctic.

These visits have been followed by interviews with persons recommended by DIAND, to obtain information from those acting on behalf of the Government of Canada in the 1950s, and from other observers of the events. With help from CHRC research staff, we have made as extensive an examination and review as is possible, within the time frame available, of documents within the Government of Canada Archives and in related government departments. We have also examined reports and research studies from the 1960s to the present time.[1]

2. BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE COMPLAINT

There is no formal statement of complaint from an Inuit organization, but the substance of their claims is generally agreed to be as follows:

1. The primary reason for relocating Inuit families from northern Quebec to the High Arctic in 1953 and 1955 was to

strengthen Canada's claim to territorial sovereignty over the eastern Arctic archipelago.

2. This purpose was not disclosed to them but rather they were told they were being moved solely for the altruistic reason of improving their quality of life, and especially with respect to the availability of "country food" (game).
3. They were promised that they would be returned to their original homes without expense if, within "two or three" years, they stated they were not happy with the new location and wished to return.
4. The relocation itself in terms of both planning and implementation was seriously flawed and inadequate, resulting in unnecessary hardship to the relocated families.
5. A large proportion of the Inuit families asked to be returned but the promise to return them was not kept.
6. The result has been long term hardship for many of the families, caused primarily by separation from other members of their family in the south.
7. The relocation did in fact strengthen Canada's claim to territorial sovereignty.

Therefore, the complainants have asked for three things:

a) Recognition of their contribution to the Canadian claim to territorial sovereignty in the High Arctic;

b) An apology for the hardship that Inuit suffered in Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay; and

c) Compensation for the wrongs done to them.

3. THE FACTS

(a) Relocation to the High Arctic

In 1952, the Government decided to consider relocating a number of Inuit families from the Ungava region of northern Quebec to the High Arctic.[2] The result was a plan to relocate families, principally from Inukjuak but with a smaller number from Pond Inlet to help the Inukjuak people acclimatize, to three locations in the High Arctic: Resolute Bay on Cornwallis Island, Craig Harbour at the southeast corner of Ellesmere Island and Alexandra Fiord[3], about halfway up the east coast of Ellesmere Island on Smith Sound and close to Greenland.

In the spring of 1953, local RCMP officers, accompanied by an interpreter, visited various Inuit camps located in the region surrounding Inukjuak, as much as 100 miles or more from the community. They arranged for Inuit families to travel to Inukjuak in late July to board the Government supply and medical ship, the "C.D. Howe" for the journey to the High Arctic. Similar arrangements were made by the local RCMP at Pond Inlet on northern Baffin Island, for three families in that region to join the relocation, one family to settle in each of the three locations. The ship made various stops on its usual route, including Pond Inlet where the three families came aboard.

On August 27, the ship arrived at Craig Harbour, where it met with another Government vessel, the "d'Iberville". One Pond Inlet family and three Inukjuak families were disembarked at Craig Harbour. The remainder of the Inuit families were transferred from the "C.D. Howe" to the "d'Iberville", which sailed

north toward Smith Sound with the intention of depositing several families at Alexandra Fiord, over 200 miles away. Part way there the ship encountered heavy sea ice and was unable to continue northward. At that point, the plan for an Inuit settlement at Alexandra Fiord was abandoned. The "C.D. Howe" had meanwhile begun its return journey to Quebec.

The "d'Iberville" returned to Craig Harbour where it deposited three more families (two from Inukjuak and one from Pond Inlet) originally intended for Alexandra Fiord, who then joined the families already disembarked during the first stop. Within a few days, the whole group were escorted by the RCMP to a location on Lindstrom Peninsula, between 40 and 50 miles to the west where they set up camp. Within a few years this group moved several miles east to the present Grise Fiord location. The remaining families aboard the "d'Iberville" (three from Inukjuak and one from Pond Inlet) continued to Resolute Bay and, on September 6, 1953, were disembarked on the shore several miles from the weather station.

In 1955, four more families from Inukjuak and one from Arctic Bay (Another community on northern Baffin Island) were moved north, three to Resolute Bay and two to Grise Fiord. In 1959 one more family moved from Pond Inlet to Resolute Bay.

In all, seventeen families, comprising 87 persons, 58 from Inukjuak, 8 from Arctic Bay and 21 from Pond Inlet were moved north, 42 to Grise Fiord and 45 to Resolute Bay.

(b) Return to the Original Communities

The first family to return to its former home went back to Pond Inlet in 1956. Subsequently, fewer than ten additional Pond Inlet relocatees returned home. I have been unable to find an accurate record of all those who returned to Inukjuak, so that what follows are merely estimates.

In the 1960s, several individuals returned to Inukjuak. Between 1970 and 1980, over 20 people returned to Inukjuak, some as individuals or couples, some as families. In the 1980s, and especially in 1988, when the Government offered to pay for the return of another group of families, at least five more families returned. (The Government also offered to compensate families who had returned earlier at their own expense.) It must be noted that a substantial number of the original adult relocatees had died by the late 1980s, so that by 1989, a very large proportion of the survivors had returned to Inukjuak. My estimate is that between 40 and 50 inhabitants of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, including a number of young children and just a few in their teens or twenties, returned to Inukjuak over a period of three decades.

4. BACKGROUND: GOVERNMENT POLICIES TOWARD THE INUIT

Until the Second World War and the ensuing cold war, the general level of knowledge and concern in the Federal Government about the Canadian Arctic appears to have been low. Even in the early 1950s, the well-being of the Inuit received little consideration. As Richard Diubaldo stated:

> ... for an era which spawned numerous planners of defence and economic policy, there appeared to be little actual,

> long-range and coordinated policy formation regarding the Inuit... civil servants of the Northwest Territories branch struggled manfully and humanely without any real rudder.[4]

Indeed, in interviewing the Inuit who were part of the relocation and in reading the reports and correspondence by civil servants of the era, one finds an absence of government policy, with decisions left largely to those civil servants directly responsible for administration. The staff of the department in Ottawa supervising the North was usually very small, often without the direct experience of having spent time in the North.

That substantial problems had resulted for the Inuit from the increasing presence of southern peoples, there was no disagreement. As might be expected, however, neither a common perception of these problems nor of the best way to resolve them was shared by Government policy makers. Nevertheless, I believe a dominant view at the time ultimately guided the relocation policy; it was supported by three quite closely related ideas.

First, a number of members of the Canadian Arctic administration shared a wistful desire to help aboriginal peoples generally to return to the lifestyle and values of an earlier era. This goal was not exclusive to its Government supporters; it has been asserted in varying degrees by aboriginal peoples themselves both Indian and Inuit, and it is still frequently heard.

To what extent is such a goal, at least with respect to returning to a traditional lifestyle, practical and worth the effort, or is it naive and unworkable, perhaps even harmful? Who, for instance, can imagine banning rifles and insisting

that Inuit return to using ancient weapons to hunt polar bears and whales? Or, perhaps more to the point, who wishes to deny Inuit access to health care, or their children opportunities for modern education?

Nevertheless, this desire for a return to the traditional way of life appears to have been a significant element in the minds of those who planned relocations of Inuit families from the 1930s to the 1950s.[5]

Second, there was a widely shared fear that the increasing Inuit population[6] was exhausting the game resources of certain regions, in this case, northern Quebec.[7] Evidence about the poor conditions of Inuit life, especially their perceived diminishing food supplies, was mentioned frequently in Government reports. Decreasing the population in Northern Quebec by relocating a significant proportion of Inuit to regions where game was plentiful was seen as a means of alleviating the food supply problem.

Third, administrators were concerned that the Inuit had become enmeshed in a demeaning process of increasing dependency on the Government of Canada for welfare handouts -- "relief" payments as they were called in the 1950s. It was assumed that returning them to their traditional lifestyle would also return them to their former independence. Moreover, the worry about ever larger sums being absorbed by native welfare obligations might thus be addressed and save the Government significant sums of money.

There was, however, a countervailing view -- that the Government could not "turn back the clock", that encroachments of

modern life were largely irreversible and that it was necessary to help the Inuit adapt to the new environment.[8] This countervailing view was never far from the surface and from time to time was the prime factor in making decisions.

5. THE ROLE OF SOVEREIGNTY CONCERNS IN THE ARCTIC

Long before the World War II, Government officials had expressed general concern over Canadian territorial sovereignty in the Arctic. In the late 1940s, the "cold war" and the very large presence of U.S. military and civilian personnel in the Arctic caused the Government to worry about its ability to sustain Canada's own presence there.[9] The response to the sovereignty concern seems to have focussed primarily on Canada expanding the presence of its own armed forces, and increasing its control over weather stations and transportation links; depending on the Americans to perform too many duties was troubling to the Government.[10] In the early 1950s, there were many references in Government documents to establishing clear control over weather stations, which until that time were shared with U.S. personnel, and to establishing new RCMP posts or to re-establishing posts that had been closed.

By 1950, the Government also expressed concern over excursions into the Canadian Arctic by Greenland Inuit: they frequently crossed over from Greenland to Ellesmere Island in the vicinity of the Bache Peninsula, hunted and sometimes passed a number of months on the island. Indeed, it appears that some Greenlanders stayed on Ellesmere for two years, from 1951 to 1953. There

were discussions about taking measures to limit if not to prohibit the access of Greenland Inuit.[11] The Government also stated that it wished to restrict contact between Canadian and Greenland Inuit, although no reasons appear to have been stated.

I have not found any direct evidence that, either immediately before or at the time of the relocations of the Inuit, the Government in Ottawa expressly decided to use them as a significant factor in reinforcing the Canadian claim to Arctic sovereignty. No document that I have examined coming from the highest levels of Government, directly states that the reason -- or a primary reason -- for relocating Inuit from Inukjuak to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay was to enhance Canadian claims to territorial sovereignty in the High Arctic. However, some civil servants at an intermediate level did make written comments which suggested that they perceived the Inuit relocations to be a means of increasing Canada's presence there.[12] It may be that they were responding to oral statements emanating from higher levels. In any event, there is ample evidence to counter the stated recollections of some former civil servants that the sovereignty issue was <u>never</u> in their minds at the time of the relocation.

Their awareness of the general worries in Ottawa suggests two reasons for their mentioning sovereignty: first, they may have added their own view that relocating Inuit in specific locations would be helpful in this regard; second, they may have referred to sovereignty simply to gain support in Ottawa for their relocation proposals.[13]

Finally, there are a number of statements made years later in Government documents[14] and in reports of observers[15] asserting that the new Inuit communities had indeed supported Canada's sovereignty claims.

In summary, the evidence about the existence of a developed Government policy in Ottawa with respect to sovereignty affecting the relocation may be considered circumstantial, but this does not mean it is insignificant. On the balance of probabilities, it is reasonable to conclude that sovereignty was a material, even if not a dominant, concern of the Canadian Government and may well have influenced relocation decisions. While I do not think the Government would have relocated Inuit for reasons of sovereignty alone, and indeed, might not even have thought of using relocation for that purpose, nevertheless -- having previously used relocation of native peoples for other purposes, and having concluded that Inuit in the Inukjuak region ought to be relocated -- sovereignty concerns may well have played a role in the timing and location of the new settlements, and particularly in selecting Ellesmere Island.

Paradoxically, this conclusion is most easily reached with respect to the one relocation of the three proposed that was abandoned, that at Alexandra Fiord near Bache Peninsula, the area where Greenlanders traditionally crossed to Ellesmere Island to hunt polar bear. However, the speed and apparent lack of deliberation with which the decision was made aboard the "d'Iberville" to abandon this location, after more than one year's planning, suggests that sovereignty was not a dominant concern. It remains

problematic just how significant territorial sovereignty concerns were.[16]

It follows from the Government denying that sovereignty was a reason for the relocation, that it would not have communicated a "non-reason" to the Inuit. Civil servants have not claimed to have discussed sovereignty with the Inuit nor have Inuit recalled such any discussions. At most, as noted in footnote 15, above, the assumption that sovereignty was an object may have been mentioned in conversations among civil servants and observers.

In view of the matters discussed below, the sovereignty question is not, in my opinion, the most important issue in the complaint of the Inuit. However, even if every other aspect of the relocation were entirely satisfactory, the question would remain whether the Government of Canada ought to acknowledge that sovereignty was not irrelevant or even insignificant, and whether the Inuit should be thanked for their contribution towards enhancing Canadian territorial sovereignty in the Arctic. This question will be discussed later.

6. THE PROMISE TO RETURN FAMILIES TO INUKJUAK IF THEY WERE UNHAPPY WITH THE RELOCATION

All the Inuit with whom I spoke and who were old enough to remember how they first learned about the relocation, gave similar narratives of that event:

1. An RCMP officer accompanied by an interpreter visited their family's camp;

2. He informed them that the government intended to move them to a new region where the hunting would be much better and their lives would improve;
3. He also said that if they were not happy with the new location they could return in "a couple of years" (or words to that effect);[17]
4. They were approached family by family at their campsites; no attempt was made to bring them together as a group to discuss the project; to them it seemed as if the government had already decided and they really had no option.
5. The RCMP offered little information about the new location; since the Inuit were entirely unfamiliar with any environment other than their own, they naturally assumed that the new site would not be drastically different from what they knew; the assurance of their ability to return allayed most fears so that they did not ask probing questions about the new location.

To most of the hunters, the male heads of the families, the relocation seemed worth a try, so why protest? Some wives worried about being separated from their families in the Inukjuak area, but they were reassured by the knowledge that they could return to their traditional home within a relatively short time.

All this makes sense and sounds consistent with my understanding of relations between representatives of the Canadian government and the Inuit. It is consistent with benevolent paternalism: the government presumed to know what was in the Inuits' best interests and prodded them along. This scenario does not

suggest deception or malevolent withholding of information. Indeed, we do not know what the RCMP officers themselves, who visited the Inuit of Inukjuak, knew about conditions on Cornwallis Island and Ellesmere Island.

Most important, there is sufficient documentary evidence to corroborate the recollections of the Inuit about receiving a promise. The following letter is sufficiently important to be reproduced in full:

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Ottawa April 14, 1953

The Director
Norther Administration and Lands Branch
Dept. of Resources and Development
Ottawa, Ontario

Re: Responsibility, Care and
Supervision of Eskimos.

1. By direction of the Commissioner of the R.C.M. Police, and having reference to your letter to him, dated the 8th. inst., I enclose one copy of each of the wireless messages which we have today sent to our Port Harrison, Fort Chimo and Pond Inlet Detachments.

2. Please note the reference in the messages to the Eskimo families being brought back to their homes. I considered it advisable to make that promise. I have in mind the sad experiences of those families of Eskimos (I believe eleven families) who were taken from Cape Dorset to Dundas Harbour in 1934 by the then Northern Administration and after being there with the Hudson's Bay Company for two years were taken to Arctic Bay and Fort Ross. They suffered hardships and asked, from time to time to be taken back to Cape Dorset. They never were taken back and the survivors and their descendants are still in the Fort Ross - Spence Bay district, under the supervision of our Spence Bay Detachment.

[signed]
H.A. Larsen, Insp.,
Officer Commanding, "G" Division.

[emphasis added]

The accompanying Teletype messages of the same date, each ended

with the following sentence:

> FAMILIES WILL BE BROUGHT BACK HOME AT END OF ONE YEAR IF THEY SO DESIRE
>
> H.A. LARSEN

This view was confirmed in a memorandum by J. Cantley, one month after the families were relocated:

> ...[the Inuit families] went north on the understanding that they would continue to live as hunters and trappers and that if they were satisfied to settle there permanently we would provide the trading facilities. On the other hand, if they did not like the country, they would be returned to their homes again.
> ... We must now wait to see how it works out. If the first group is successful and satisfied, others will follow. If not, then we shall have to bring them back.[18] [emphasis added]

A further confirmation is found in an assessment of progress three years later:

> After two years [sic] the people seem content to stay on, whereas they only agreed to go in the first place on condition that we promised to return them to their former homes after "two or three years."[19]

Although there seems to be some confusion about whether the Inuit were promised to be returned after one, two or three years (and the Inuit themselves were uncertain of the exact time), there is no uncertainty that promises were made to return them if they so desired.

7. OVERALL PLANNING OF THE RELOCATION

(a) Information About the Relocation Sites

I have noted that an important goal of the relocation -- indeed, the Government asserts, the primary goal -- was to move Inuit families to regions where game resources were plentiful. It would seem reasonable, then, to expect to find scientific data used by

civil servants to help them determine that Ellesmere Island and Cornwallis Island had sufficient game. However, there is no evidence that such data had ever been gathered.

Instead, the Government relied on two observations: first, that Greenland Inuit frequented Ellesmere Island in order to hunt because game appeared to be plentiful; second, that RCMP officers and members of government expeditions had, over several years, observed substantial numbers of polar bears, foxes and other game on Ellesmere Island and Cornwallis Island. But there were no systematic counts made[20] nor was the Wildlife Service asked to provide advice. The evidence was impressionistic albeit provided, at least in part, by some people quite experienced in High Arctic conditions.

Government reports are consistent with this approach: they described the relocation in these regions as being in the nature of an experiment. R.G. Robertson, Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, summarized this view succinctly in a letter dated February 18, 1954, to C.M. Drury, Deputy Minister of National Defence:

> As you will note from the Minutes of [the Meeting of the Advisory Council on Northern Development, held on 10th of August 1953] the transfer of a few families of Eskimos to Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands was made as an experiment to determine how well Eskimos from southern areas could adapt themselves to conditions in the high Arctic and make a living for themselves by hunting and trapping.
> ... Present indications are that they will be able and happy to do so. If the experiment continues to show satisfactory results, we may consider transferring more families... [emphasis added]

This approach to the question of relocation was reflected consistently in Government communications, beginning in late 1952

and continuing through 1956. The following excerpts from a letter of May 10, 1956, by Mr. Robertson to Commissioner L.H. Nicholson of the RCMP, about a prospective resettlement to a location on Devon Island, explains well the approach taken:

> With regard to the possibility of such a move in a later year, we have been looking into the history of Dundas Harbour. I gather there is some doubt about it as a location likely to support Eskimo hunters and trappers. The Hudson's Bay Company opened a post there with the idea that it might be productive. Their experience was that the wildlife population went down very quickly with a minimum of killing and was not capable of regenerating at a rate anywhere near sufficient for the needs of the small group of Eskimos that were moved in there... [There follows some speculation about the reasons.]
> ... The two establishments at Craig Harbour and Resolute Bay seem to be doing well. However, the officers in the Wildlife Service are not sure that a definite conclusion, based on the experience of only two years, would be justified. They feel that the question as to whether the animal population can stand the present amount of killing cannot be answered in such a short time. [emphasis added]

These quotations leave no doubt that selection of the relocation areas was not the result of extensive scientific research,[21] but was in the nature of an experiment with regard to both the game resources and the adaptability of "Eskimos from southern areas".

A further aspect of planning the relocation sites related to the selection of Inuit families and their allocation to the three settlements. Memoranda from late 1952 and early 1953 suggested relocating a total of 15 families, five at each site. There was no attempt to compare the availability of game in each region in order to learn whether one site might support more families than might another. We can only speculate that the authors assumed five families was a sufficiently low number that they would not exhaust the wildlife stocks at any location. As we shall see in Section 10, below, no effort was made to allocate families to

each site in advance; those decisions were made on board the "C.D. Howe" just before disembarking at Craig Harbour.

The nature of the experiment deserves comment. After examining the documents and speaking with a number of civil servants who participated in the relocation, and speaking with RCMP Constable Gibson, who accompanied the first families from Inukjuak and remained with them at Resolute Bay, I find that no one believed they were putting the lives of the Inuit at risk. RCMP visited the new camps on a regular basis and believed themselves to be sufficiently nearby to cope with emergencies that might arise, although the visits were clearly less frequent at Lindstrom Peninsula where the RCMP detachment was almost 50 miles away. In addition, as noted below, the Government had promised to return those Inuit who were sufficiently dissatisfied with the High Arctic to request going back to Inukjuak. None of this is to say either that some risks did not arise, or that they could not reasonably have been foreseen. Furthermore, while the experiment was not life endangering, it could and should have been foreseen as likely to cause some hardship.

(b) Budget and Authorization for the Relocation

I have been unable to find any formal authorization of the relocation; all information about planning and implementation is found in memoranda, letters and reports of committee meetings, prepared by civil servants at various levels from deputy minister to RCMP constables. Without studying normal Government practices in authorizing projects of a similar nature in the 1950s, I have no basis for assuming that the lack of formal authorization was

irregular. Indeed, it may be consistent with normal practices as well as with the budget arrangements discussed immediately below.

As for transportation aboard the "C.D. Howe" and the "d'Iberville", it appears that the Department of Transport did not charge for the cargo space made available to the Inuit. It did charge a small amount for food -- a very limited diet -- but the sum was recovered from "relief" (welfare) payments already set aside for the Inuit in Inukjuak. I do not know of any Department of Resources and Development budget item for transportation.

The only records of budget for the project refer to the "Eskimo Loan Fund" -- a system of lending money to Inuit communities in order to make supplies available through Hudson's Bay Company stores or Government supply outlets. The sums so lent were repaid when Inuit delivered fur pelts to the store, principally white fox pelts, but also some polar bear and seal skins. Thus, strictly speaking, there was no expenditure made that required authorization; there was only a loan given that was expected to be repaid. For each of the three anticipated settlements, a loan fund of $5000 was set up, formally in the name of a leading member of each Inuit community. Goods and equipment placed aboard the "C.D. Howe" and ultimately put ashore in custody of an RCMP officer, were charged against the fund for each settlement; when individual Inuit paid with fur pelts for items acquired by them, the loan fund account was credited accordingly.

To the best of my knowledge, then, there was neither formal authorization nor a specific budget allocation for the relocation project.

(c) Housing, Equipment and Supplies

As noted above, the sole source of these items for the Inuit relocatees was the Eskimo Loan Fund. The sum of $5000 in 1953, while perhaps ample for basic equipment and supplies (it is very difficult to assess the adequacy of such a sum), clearly did not include housing. Indeed, no civil servant has suggested that it did. A different assumption about housing the Inuit families prevailed: they had been expected to bring with them their own equipment -- family possessions, sleds, dogs, guns and tents; deficiencies in any equipment and supplies were to be supplemented by purchases in their own names using the loan fund, to be repaid from subsequently earned income. They would live in tents, in snow houses and sod huts, as they had lived in the Inukjuak region. None of the reports suggested that any thought was given to providing housing. In fact, beyond transporting them to the High Arctic without charge, there appeared to be no intention to provide without charge to the Inuit any tangible benefits in return for their participation in the resettlement.[22]

I have heard contradictory opinions from civil servants regarding this policy. Some have asserted that housing conditions were very poor in and around Inukjuak, and accordingly, there was no special reason to provide additional housing resources in the High Arctic. Others have noted that the climate is harsher there: cold weather arrives much earlier, and often without sufficient snow to build snow houses. They point out that in regions like Grise Fiord there is virtually no soil or lichen, only rocky terrain, making it very difficult to construct sod huts. As a result

only tents, with less insulation than snow houses or sod huts, were available for most of the first winter. Indeed, some civil servants have suggested that failing to provide for adequate housing was a big mistake in planning the relocation project. After interviewing Inuit who spent their first winter at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord in makeshift housing, I am inclined to agree with that opinion.

8. CARRYING OUT THE PLAN

(a) Informing and Preparing the Families

As noted earlier in section 6, the Inuit claim they were told very little about conditions in the High Arctic. F. Ross Gibson, the RCMP constable who travelled to the Inuit camps in the Inukjuak region, has said that at the time he thought they would be most affected by the differences in climate. Through his interpreter he made efforts to inform each family he visited about the High Arctic climate. He tried to explain the long period of winter darkness and the need to hunt while it continued, as well as speaking about the colder weather. His impression was that they took it quite lightly.

In contrast, welfare teacher, Miss E.M. Hinds, referring in her 1958 book to the "families who moved to the far north" several years earlier, wrote:

> I helped outfit them, and I also tried to teach them about the sunless winter, quoting my experiences at Fort McPherson as illustration... They have adapted themselves to the dark winter, for in their imagination, before they experienced one such winter, it was a great deal worse than the real thing. Which is usually the case with imagined ills.[23] [emphasis added]

Here we can see that two well-informed inhabitants of Inukjuak during the preparation period for the relocation came away with opposite impressions of the Inuit reaction to information communicated to them about the High Arctic. In addition, former civil servants have noted that they knew it was difficult, if not impossible, to explain such matters to the Inuit. It has also been suggested that access to high quality translation between English and Inuktitut was very limited in the 1950s; it is uncertain how accurate the interpreters were in explaining the relocation to the Inuit as well as in conveying their response. Some misunderstanding may well have arisen through translation difficulties.

The conclusions that follow from these observations are that: informing the prospective Inuit relocatees about conditions in the High Arctic was a very difficult task; and, it is uncertain how aware of the difficulties were the civil servants involved. In fact, it appears that the Inuit had very little idea of what the new living conditions would be like -- they either assumed conditions would not be radically different from northern Quebec, or they trusted the Government -- or both. I will discuss the consequences of this finding in section 12, below.

(b) <u>The Landing and the First Winter</u>

The recollections of the Inuit and of civil servants with respect to the landings at Craig Harbour and at Resolute Bay do not differ in general terms. Those that landed at Craig Harbour spent one week near the detachment; they were joined during that week by the families turned back by heavy sea ice on the way to Alexandra Fiord. The RCMP then took the whole group by boat to

Lindstrom Peninsula, a location about 50 miles to the west on the south shore of Ellesmere Island (six or seven miles west of the eventual permanent site at Grise Fiord). They had only their tents and their own equipment.

Apart from the RCMP detachment at Craig Harbour, there was no other settlement that as a practical matter they could visit. To reach Resolute Bay would take several weeks' travel guided by some one who knew the route. The RCMP visited the new camp every ten days to two weeks. Otherwise, they were entirely isolated and dependent on their own resources. The two Pond Inlet families that had joined the families from Inukjuak were crucial to their survival, teaching them how to hunt under High Arctic conditions and how to identify fresh-water ice. They were unable to build sod huts the first winter and had to remain in their tents until there was enough snow in January to build snow houses. Because of errors made, either in loading sufficient equipment and supplies on board the "C.D. Howe" or in unloading them at Craig Harbour, there was a shortage of some important supplies, including tent fabric, furs used to insulate their tents, and clothing. They also had to make a 100-mile return trip from their campsite to Craig Harbour to obtain any additional supplies. Lastly, the variety of country food was much more limited than in Inukjuak; virtually no fish or fowl was available.

These conditions, unexplained to the relocated families beforehand (and, in any event, unknown to the Government people in Inukjuak), made their arrival an unpleasant surprise. It is reasonable to conclude that they were unprepared for the new

conditions and found the first winter harsh and frightening. In particular, the women found it very difficult in the unrelieved darkness: when their husbands and teen-age sons would depart on hunting expeditions, they would find themselves confined to their tents or snow houses with the small children. To go outside was only to find darkness and lower temperatures. The following spring, a number were unhappy and wished to leave.

Conditions at Resolute Bay were somewhat less intimidating: the RCMP constable lived nearby at the RCAF base and could visit more frequently. Although the base was off limits to the Inuit, they were able to collect scrap wood to burn, and eventually found packing crates and other pieces of lumber to build winter homes in subsequent years. And it was easier to buy supplies and equipment at the detachment store. In other respects, the factors that made life harsh at Lindstrom Peninsula applied also at Resolute Bay.

Later reporters observed that the Inuits' state of health, their clothing and housing improved markedly over the next few years. They state that the relocated families were better off materially than they had been in Inukjuak. Whether or not these reports were accurate does not affect the fact that the first year was a stressful one for the relocatees.

(c) Provision of Services

At Inukjuak in 1953, there was a Hudson's Bay Company store, an Anglican church, a nursing station established in 1947, and a welfare teacher and school established in 1949. These facilities were available to the Inuit from the settlement and surrounding

area, and had become significant elements in their lives. While not all children were able to attend school regularly, the families had access to the school and to medical care. The church and school were also centres of social activities.

With the exception of limited store supplies available from the RCMP detachment, none of the other services were planned nor made available to the Inuit of the Grise Fiord region in the early years. At Resolute Bay, emergency medical services were available but not schooling or a church. Constable Gibson made personal efforts to help build a room from scrap lumber,[24] and to provide some social events, especially at Christmas. Overall, however, there was a substantial reduction in services available to the Inuit families, services to which they had become accustomed in the years preceding their relocation.

In summary, the families arrived at their destinations in the High Arctic poorly informed about conditions, some were poorly equipped for winter conditions, especially with respect to housing, and some important supplies were not available. They found the first winter very hard.[25] And, they no longer had access to the majority of basic services to which they had become accustomed in Inukjuak.

(d) Payment for Furs and Employment

i- Proper credit for furs. By 1953, the Inuit in northern Quebec as elsewhere in Canada had become accustomed to, indeed dependent on, supplies brought into their communities from the south. They used rifles for hunting and required a regular supply of ammunition; they used many household

utensils, from knives to pots, pans and stoves. In addition to country food, southern staples such as flour, sugar and tea had become part of their normal diet. Many used manufactured articles of clothing and footwear to supplement the items they made themselves. They needed money to acquire these items from Hudson's Bay Company stores and, once they moved to the High Arctic, from RCMP detachment stores.

While family allowances may have provided some income for the Inuit, the main source was their own earnings. As noted in the preceding section, they earned money from fur pelts, primarily white fox, both in northern Quebec and in the High Arctic. Indeed, the cycles of plenty and scarcity for white fox[26] contributed greatly to the fears for Inuit well-being in the early 1950s. The situation was substantially worsened by a severe drop in world prices for fox furs. In Inukjuak, the Inuit had begun to supplement their income by carving in soapstone, and a few Inuit earned wages from employment in the hamlet itself. Moving to the High Arctic did not lessen the demand for the products imported from the south. Inuit families expected to find and did find the same income sources there.

With respect to furs, there were occasional complaints that some Inuit did not receive proper credit for their pelts at the Government stores; over the years, there may have been some accounting errors, but in general the RCMP detachments appeared to have been very careful in keeping accounts for each Inuit hunter.[27] In 1960, a more serious

complaint arose, not regarding individual accounts but about the Inuit receiving too low a price for their furs, which were subsequently sold at much higher prices in the south. RCMP Constable G.B. Warner at Grise Fiord complained that the benefit of the higher prices had not been passed on to Inuit hunters.[28]

Whether or not the extra profits were eventually credited to the Inuit trading stores, the stores eventually made and retained substantial profits. This fact proved to be something of an embarrassment that was avoided by the arrival of the co-operative movement in the Arctic. Procedures began during the spring and summer of 1960 to establish co-operative stores at both Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay.[29] These developments suggest that the perceptions of the Inuit about not receiving adequate remuneration were often justified, and that the shortcomings were ultimately corrected, if not for the individual hunters, then at least for the general benefit of each Inuit community.

ii- Wages for employment. This matter seemed to have been subject to greater misunderstanding. The RCMP constables distinguished two types of situations. In the first, they went with Inuit on hunting expeditions in order to encourage them, or perhaps simply went along as companions. Constable Gibson has acknowledged that sometimes there may well have been a mistaken perception: the Inuit believed they were performing a service that should be remunerated while the

RCMP constable believed that he was simply making a friendly gesture by joining in the hunt.

The above misunderstanding probably aggravated the confusion within the Government administration in the second situation, where Inuit were asked to assist in guiding southern groups (as occurred with various geological surveys), or where they performed tasks, such as helping in construction or unloading cargo. The earliest reference I have found appears in a letter from Superintendent H.A. Larsen, dated June 2, 1954, to the Director, Northern Administration and Lands Branch, expressing concern that individual Inuit workers were not receiving proper credit.[30] The reply from F.J.G. Cunningham, dated June 14, 1954, stated that any credits received "are used to reduce the [Eskimo loan fund]", but nevertheless "still permits individual Eskimos who earned the wages... to take full payment in kind..." In accounting terms, these statements are somewhat confusing: presumably, those Inuit already indebted to the fund were able to reduce both their individual indebtedness and thus part of the loan fund debt through wage credits, but it is difficult to see how a worker who took payment in goods could at the same time reduce the overall loan to the fund.[31] How these arrangements might have been understood by the Inuit wage earners remains unexplained.

Two further examples occur in reports by Constable Gibson. In the first, dated October 2, 1954, he described

work done by Inuit "to uncover a broken pipeline", and reported that:

> A signal has gone forward to the Department of Transport regarding this work advising them to credit the respective native accounts accordingly, with the Department of Resources and Development, Ottawa. [emphasis added]

In the second, dated June 26, 1956, concerning construction work, he states:

> Pay cheques will arrive at Resolute for signature by the natives and forwarded in the proper manner to the Department of Northern Affairs. [emphasis added]

Many people find even simple accounting confusing and difficult: with the arrangements described above, it is not surprising that a number of Inuit did not understand whether or not they received individual credit, both in accounting terms and ultimately in purchasing power, for work done. Moreover, looking after detailed accounts of the nature described -- and explaining them to others -- seems to be an unusual, even if a necessary, duty to assign to an RCMP constable in the High Arctic along with many other responsibilities. Perhaps the confusion was inevitable; it was certainly unfortunate. However, without detailed scrutiny by a qualified accountant of all the books kept in the 1950s, I am unable to come to any conclusion, beyond noting that a number of Inuit did not understand the arrangements for receiving proper credit for work done. Their failure to understand and any resulting suspicion was not unreasonable; whether or not there were significant errors in payment, I have been unable to determine.

9. THE CULTURAL GAP

In my view, the most important aspect of the relocation -- and the most complex -- is what may be called the "cultural gap" between those representing the Government of Canada and the Inuit people. Civil servants at all levels seem to have shared a common view that the Inuit could not look after themselves in the quickly changing conditions in Canada's north, and it was the Government's responsibility to look after the Inuit. In more recent writings and in interviews with former civil servants as well as others, I have found general agreement that the Canadian attitude and approach to the Inuit in the 1950s was highly paternalistic.

(a) Inuit Values and Priorities

It is trite but true that recognizing the cultural gap is but the beginning. The second step, presumptuous though it may be, is to try to identify the elements of the Inuit culture that are relevant to the issues in this complaint, and to examine the consequences of the relocation in the light of those elements. With a diffidence that I have decided to overcome, I shall examine three cultural elements encountered in my discussions with Inuit who were part of the relocation: i- the importance of family; ii- the importance of environment; iii- the approach to personal relations and to resolution of disagreements.

i- The importance of family. Inuit have traditionally lived in a harsh environment with limited food resources; they have had to hunt over large areas to find sufficient country food (and material for clothing, etc.) to survive. Accordingly, they have lived in relatively small communities, usually not

more than 30 persons. The community is an enlarged family, or may be described as a small clan, with other related families often living within a journey of a day or two from their camp.

In these circumstances -- closely related, dependent on one another for survival, and spending most of their time in the company of their own group -- they develop a great attachment to one another, an attachment broader than that based solely on the more nuclear family of mother, father and unmarried children. (I believe that this close attachment is not unique to the Inuit but is shared with people in other parts of the world that live under analogous conditions.) The Inuit are also accustomed to temporary separation during hunting seasons, and sometimes to migrating great distances, but when they do migrate the whole clan-community moves together.

It follows that a separation of 1250 miles between two parts of an Inuit clan, such as sisters and brothers who have become parents of their own nuclear families, once they realized that there was no practical way of visiting or rejoining each other, created serious emotional upset, especially for those who had undertaken the move away. It helps to explain why, when they were informed that it was not feasible to return to Inukjuak, they asked that other members of their family left in Inukjuak join them in the High Arctic.

ii- The importance of environment. People who live close to the land and depend on it for virtually every aspect of their sustenance, become very knowledgeable and acutely aware of that environment and all its characteristics. Familiarity brings with it a strong attachment to the land. Even though they are capable of adapting to strange surroundings and may eventually improve their quality of life, they keep their strong attachment to the land where they were born and grew up. Thus, it is not surprising that the Inuit who were relocated to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay retained a strong desire to return to their familiar Inukjuak surroundings with its plant life and game. This was a second factor that contributed to their wish to return to the Inukjuak region of northern Quebec.

Unfortunately, this factor also contributed to the splitting of families more than a generation later. On the one hand, when finally it became practical for the original relocatees to the High Arctic to return to Inukjuak, many were anxious both to join other members of their family and to be back in the environment of their youth. On the other hand, their children faced a new dilemma: they had grown up in the High Arctic in a changing society; they went to school with family members and friends their own age; thus they had a different frame of reference from their parents. The new generation were confronted with the difficult choice of accompanying their parents to a strange environment in Inukjuak with an unfamiliar generation their own age, or of

remaining in the High Arctic in familiar surroundings but being separated from their parents.

Some children refused to leave the High Arctic. Some went back with their parents, were unhappy and returned to Grise Fiord or Resolute Bay, while others decided to remain "south", so dividing families of the same generation. These painful consequences were unforeseen by those who implemented the relocations. Whether with better scientific advice they could and should have been foreseen may be debatable. Nevertheless, the undesirable consequences for the families is clear enough: they have suffered emotional loss from the relocations in two generations, losses that seem little understood by other Canadians.

iii- The approach to personal relations and to resolution of disagreements. Travellers in the Arctic have often remarked in their accounts that in their contact with the Inuit they found them pleasant, friendly people who smile easily. While such observations are meant as compliments, they may be superficial and carry a connotation that is probably unintentionally pejorative: they support a long dominant view that the Inuit are like good children. A more carefully thought out interpretation of their friendliness arises from understanding how the Inuit have learned to live in small communities and survive in a harsh environment. Under these conditions, people must learn to cooperate, to depend on one another and to do their best to create an uncontentious social atmosphere: coping with the physical environment is

enough of a challenge in itself. The Inuit approach to people from another culture was not different: they would avoid conflict and personal unpleasantness if they possibly could do so.

In addition, the white southerners entered the lives of the Inuit as a technologically dominant group -- with guns and other equipment and ultimately with aircraft. The southerners presumed to be in charge, as we shall see illustrated in the next section by the 1951 report of welfare teacher, Miss E.M. Hinds. The Inuit with whom I have discussed this issue have freely stated that in the 1950s, they viewed representatives of the Government, and especially the RCMP, almost as gods, not to be argued with. The southerners also brought desirable material benefits with them. Besides, as we have noted, it was contrary to the Inuit culture to engage in confrontation.

(b) A Bargain or an Order?

The almost pervasive assessment of the Inuit as a very primitive people who needed protection contained no malevolence, but it did lead to them being treated as children who did not need to be consulted fully by the Government in coming to decisions that might profoundly affect their lives.

The cultural gap problem is filled with nuances: there are a number of references to the Inuit who were relocated as "volunteers", and it is probably true, especially among those civil servants who were removed from the actual conversations with the

Inuit families, that in general they believed the Inuit to be volunteers who had made a bargain with the Government.

The language of many Government documents talks about "sending" or "transferring" Inuit families to new locations. These words are ambiguous: they might be taken to mean, "We are quite sure we can persuade a number of Inuit families to move to the new location." However, after examining the words in context, I find that the assumption about Government control is almost invariably much stronger: the words generally appear to mean, "We can arrange to move enough Inuit families without worrying about the prospect of much resistance to the move."

So, while the Government argues that it merely asked, but could not insist upon compliance, and while southern "white" administrators thought of their proposals only as suggestions or gentle persuasion, most Inuit perceived of the proposals as orders that had to be followed. Interviews with a number of Inuit who are old enough to remember lead me to conclude that they believed they had no real option but to accept: when an RCMP officer said, "You will be better off in the new location," the Inuit listener very likely interpreted him as saying, "You must go to the new location where, by the way, you will be better off."

This perception, perhaps even more strongly than I have put it, comes out clearly in the words of Miss E.M. Hinds, a welfare teacher in Port Harrison (Inukjuak) in the early 1950s. In discussing some lesser relocations in the region, within 100 miles or so of Port Harrison, she stated:

> Port Harrison natives have been [here] to tell me that the new policeman is going to send them away from the

> settlement... the missionary and the clerk at the Hudson's Bay store have heard from the constable himself that this is what he intends to do -- to send away from Port Harrison all natives who are not working for white people.
>
> ... I feel that now that there is a school at Port Harrison it is ridiculous to send away from the settlement most of the families with children of school age and to leave those who have only tiny children or none...
>
> Other people in the settlement, i.e. white people, apparently agree with the constable's decision...
>
> I understand that natives lived here long before white men came to this region. The native name for Port Harrison means "the place where there are many Eskimos." Two of the families who have been told to go have, I understand, never asked for relief, and they resent being told to go as their families have always lived there.
>
> I would suggest that if the constable puts this plan into operation he should be asked to provide transport for the welfare teacher to visit the children concerned... [32]
> [emphasis added]

This language unmistakably implied that decisions to relocate Inuit were those of the constable -- not joint decisions reached with the Inuit but rather decisions imposed upon them. Miss Hinds, a white southern woman and a highly respected observer of the Arctic, assumed that the RCMP officer was in charge and gave orders. It hardly seems surprising then, that the Inuit themselves should feel they had no real option but to accept the orders to go. While it is true that the events she described took place about 18 months before the relocations to the High Arctic, her description reinforces the pervasive paternalistic attitude toward making decisions for the Inuit, and we have no evidence to suggest that the prevailing attitude changed dramatically by the spring of 1953.

In summary, the accepted and official position within Government was that the Inuit who agreed to participate in the relocation were volunteers. As a practical matter, those responsible for implementing the plan gave little thought to the

question of free choice: they assumed that their project was in the best interests of the Inuit and would be accepted by them without serious objection. Of course, if a particular family had been sufficiently upset to refuse to go, the civil servant would not likely have forced the issue, although there is evidence that great persistence was used to persuade a Pond Inlet family to agree to the move.

The Inuit impression of their position, as a practical matter, was not in conflict with the above view: they felt under great pressure not to resist the proposal to relocate, for the reasons already noted. It would have required feelings of desperation on their part to utter a definitive "no" when asked to go. In my opinion, for such a request to be considered an order, it need not be backed by fear of physical compulsion. The circumstances support the claim that most Inuit felt they had no option but to participate in the relocation.

10. SOME EARLY CONSEQUENCES OF THE CULTURAL GAP

(a) Placing Families in Settlements Far From Each Other

The unhappy consequences of separation, discussed under Inuit Values and Priorities in the preceding section, applied also to separating families in two High Arctic locations, 240 miles apart. While the distance was not so great as that between Inukjuak and the far north, in a different way the effect was more severe.

Without exception, all the Inuit interviewed stated that they did not learn about being separated into different camps

until they arrived at Craig Harbour. Upon arrival they were told that several families would be disembarked and would remain in the Craig Harbour area while the others would proceed to two different locations, some to the soon-to-be-abandoned Alexandra Fiord site and the remainder to Resolute Bay. The news of separation came suddenly, without any chance to prepare themselves emotionally. In contrast, before leaving on the "C.D. Howe" a month earlier, the Inuit had known for a number of weeks that they would be leaving family behind; they had also known which other members of their family would be joining them on the journey north, and they had spent a month together aboard ship. The news of the second separation came as a shock: in interviews I was told that the women began to sob and in response a number of their dogs began to howl.

There is no evidence at all that Inuit families were offered a choice of locations, or were asked whom they would prefer as neighbours. They simply were told to disembark at Craig Harbour or to transfer to the "d'Iberville" in order to proceed to the other two destinations. Whatever debate there might be about the voluntary nature of originally consenting to leave the Inukjuak region, I believe there can be none about the choice of relocation sites: the Inuit were not given an option -- they were <u>told</u> where to disembark.

This account is consistent with information in the documents available[33] and with a telephone interview with Mr. Ross Gibson, the RCMP officer who accompanied the Inuit aboard the "C.D. Howe". He stated that he had not been given specific information

about the location or locations of the new settlements and believed that the primary location was to be near the Bache Peninsula on Ellesmere Island. He was not aware of plans for Resolute Bay, despite the fact that a number of interdepartmental reports had discussed three locations. This picture suggests a substantial failure in communication between those directing the relocation and those responsible for implementing it.

(b) Bringing Families from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet into a Single Community

The planners of the relocation were aware that northern Quebec Inuit, who lived almost 600 miles south of the Arctic Circle at a latitude of 58°30'N (much as in northern Scotland), were accustomed to daylight throughout the winter, even if the hours were quite short, and would be moving to the High Arctic (between 600 and 900 miles north of the Arctic Circle -- 74°40'N at Resolute Bay, 76°26N at Grise Fiord and 79°00'N at Alexandra Fiord) with its three months of darkness. The climate is also different: temperatures year round are substantially lower in the High Arctic, the summer season is much shorter, and there is no period of what southern Inuit would think of as summer weather. Ice and snow conditions and the nature of the land mean that hunting techniques are quite different from those in the south.

For these reasons, the planners decided that it would be particularly helpful to the Inuit from Inukjuak to have as neighbours and advisers in the newly established communities at least one family that was much more adapted to the far north. Accordingly, they arranged for three families from Pond Inlet, (over

400 miles north of the Arctic Circle, latitude 72°40'N) to be moved, one to each of the three relocation sites.

As noted earlier, two Pond Inlet families settled at Grise Fiord in 1953 and one family at Resolute Bay. The families from Inukjuak and the RCMP officers agree that the Pond Inlet hunters were especially helpful that first winter, in particular, in teaching High Arctic hunting skills and how to recognize supplies of fresh water in their frozen state. However, there is also general agreement that the two groups did not get along well because there were significant differences:

- in dialect that hindered communication, although it did not prevent it;
- in important customs; and
- in clothing and in design of essential equipment, such as sleds.

The two groups tended to look down on each other, did not spend time together socially and with rare exception, did not intermarry, the latter being an important disadvantage in such isolated communities where finding a spouse was very difficult without extensive travel. At one point, the Lindstrom Peninsula settlers actually divided into two locations, one for Inukjuak families and the other for Pond Inlet families, about two miles apart, before finally moving to the current Grise Fiord site where the RCMP detachment is located.

It may be argued that the cultural differences between the two groups were not grave and in any event that it was worth putting up with the subsequent difficulties in order to help the

Inukjuak families acclimatize. Nevertheless, the civil servants seemed unaware of the differences beforehand, further indicating a lack of knowledge about the Inuit as a people.

(c) Requests to Return to Inukjuak

The Inuit approach to personal relations helps explain the fact that most outside observers who visited Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay came away with an impression that the Inuit were generally very satisfied with their lot. These observations are also central to the views often expressed by civil servants that the Inuit did not state that they wished to return to Inukjuak, or if they did ask about returning, did not complain when told that it would be difficult or impossible to do so.

First, in the minds of at least some civil servants the question of "return" was vague, or they thought that no promise had been made (although as already noted, in fact, promises had been made). Therefore, they attributed little importance to it.

Second, they failed to understand that in the circumstances of the person making the request -

i. having been separated from family in Inukjuak for two years or more,

ii. having been told that they must wait another year for the supply ship to return and take them, not to Inukjuak but to Montreal, whence they would have to find the money to return on their own to Inukjuak,[34] and

iii. having very little if any money at that early stage of their stay in the High Arctic,

the consequences of stating these difficulties was tantamount in the mind of the requester to a complete refusal to return him and his family to Inukjuak.

In my opinion, a promise of return cannot mean less than that the Inuit family and their belongings would be transported from the High Arctic back to Inukjuak, without any expense to themselves. Accordingly, the Inuit were correct in their view that ii. and iii. above, amounted to a refusal of their request to be returned. A delay until the following year when a ship would arrive to pick them up was considered inevitable, and the Inuit would have so understood. However, the fact that the supply ships had a traditional route, one that had never gone from the High Arctic back into Hudson Bay is irrelevant to the promise made to the Inuit. The Government must be taken to have been aware of the route when it made its promises and it was up to it to make satisfactory arrangements to keep its promises.

Third, civil servants failed to appreciate that the lack of persistence by Inuit in face to face meetings on the subject of the promise to return them to Inukjuak was due not to lack of deep concern, but to their cultural disposition to avoid confrontation and unpleasantness, reinforced by the normal intimidation felt by Inuit from civil servants generally, and particularly from RCMP officers who were charged with looking after them.[35] It is important to emphasize that no malevolence is implied; to the extent that the Inuit felt intimidated, it was the result of the historical relationship between them and civil servants.

The Inuit's concern for avoiding conflict, yet keeping their desire to be reunited with family alive, is demonstrated in two other ways. First, when their ability to return seemed blocked, they sought an alternative solution and asked whether members of their family could not join them in the High Arctic. This request seems almost invariably to have been misinterpreted as evidence of great satisfaction with the relocation ("bring more of our family here") rather than as a stoic, second-best request to be reunited with their family in the High Arctic if not in Inukjuak.

Second, they did not abandon their claim. Instead they substituted a more non-confrontational means that would avoid personal unpleasantness with civil servants whom they encountered on a more or less regular basis: they wrote letters directly to the Government requesting to be returned to Inukjuak.[36]

In Part 6, above, I found that the Inuit families who moved to the High Arctic had been promised that if they so requested they would be returned to Inukjuak at Government expense within one to three years. Here, I find further that:

a) In the first three years after the move, a number of heads of families expressed to local officials, principally to local RCMP officers, their unhappiness with the new locations and their wish to return, although they may have couched their request in very mild terms.

b) The officials tended to minimize the significance of the requests and responded by explaining how difficult it would be, in terms of both travel arrangements and money, to return to Inukjuak.

c) The Inuit understandably and accurately interpreted these statements as a refusal in any practical sense to facilitate their return. For cultural reasons they did not persist in their face-to-face requests although they retained a strong desire to return to their former homes.

d) The evidence of this desire is found in their continued writing of letters to the Government asking to be returned, and indeed, in ultimately returning to Inukjuak when the opportunities presented themselves, as late as 1988.

Accordingly, I find that in the 1950s and 1960s, the Government failed to keep its promise of return to Inukjuak, causing considerable unhappiness and pain to those Inuit who wished to return.

11. LONG TERM EFFECTS

(a) Family Relations

In section 9, I have already noted one important consequence of the relocation, the unresolvable emotional conflict between remaining in the same region as other members of one's family and returning in the environment of one's childhood. A large proportion of the first generation relocatees who have survived, have chosen to return to Inukjuak, the place of their childhood environment and where their remaining family lived. However, a large proportion of those who grew up in the High Arctic with their own generation have chosen to remain there despite the fact that their parents have returned to Inukjuak. This geographic separation between generations has resulted in continuing stress and

anguish for both groups. It is a difficult, indeed perplexing, problem for them.

A related difficulty, created by the substantial isolation of the two High Arctic communities, was that of young people of marriageable age finding suitable spouses. The Inuit shared a common concern about inbreeding resulting from intermarriage within one's own larger family. They traditionally looked outside the family group for spouses. As already noted, in northern Quebec, Inuit groups lived within a day or two of travel to other camps. Thus, it was relatively easy for young people to meet prospective spouses outside their own group. However, in Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, such contact was impractical; as youngsters grew up they were forced to look outside their own communities, and it was both difficult to arrange and expensive. While those Inuit whom I interviewed did not raise this problem as a major complaint nowadays, it did cause hardship for at least two decades, until long-distance travel became practical. Reports of RCMP constables mention this difficulty, as do several academic studies.

(b) <u>A Sense of Injustice</u>

A second and more subtle cause of anguish relates more closely to Inuit self awareness and self esteem. Looking back at the events of the 1950s, many wonder at the way they were treated. Having suffered the consequences of separation, they ask why. The paternalism that is admitted by most civil servants is painfully obvious to Inuit who now have a more clear-eyed view of their white governors, with all their frailties of insensitivity

and hubris. Looking back they can see that civil servants and RCMP officers were not omniscient: they took chances with respect to known game resources; they did not manage to explain, no matter how difficult, what the High Arctic would be like; they mismanaged transporting adequate supplies and equipment for the first winter; they failed to provide schooling and adequate medical care for a number of years; and they failed to honour the promise of return within two or three years. These things by themselves have contributed over the years to a growing sense of injustice.

It is no solace to say to the Inuit that it was for their own good, that the hardship and fright of the first year was worthwhile and in the longer term they were better off. In particular, they worry about the thought that they might have been pawns in a project that was more distasteful than merely being paternalistic, namely, a project designed primarily to support Canadian claims to territorial sovereignty in the High Arctic. I believe this to be a very harmful worry -- that they may have been duped by their own Government. It is harmful in two respects.

The first and more obvious is that of being wronged by their Government, by the people they should have been able to trust. Indeed, as I find in the next section, there was historically, both in fact and in law, a high fiduciary obligation on the Government of Canada to act in the best interests of the Inuit people. Putting their trust in the Government was the reasonable and proper thing to do. The second part comes from feeling duped.

Most people feel personally diminished when they have been "taken in". For the Inuit, whose increasing education and understanding -- especially during the late 1970s and the 1980s -- of the dominant southern society in recent decades has permitted them to investigate the circumstances of the relocation, it is doubly hard because it implies that in the 1950s they were too simple and naive to be capable of resisting manipulation by white civil servants.

(This discussion requires a brief observation about the claim of a number of critics, that the Inuit complaint is largely the work of a few malcontents. The critics have not understood that the growing Inuit perception of injustice is much more generalized: it comes from looking back at the events of the 1950s with greater sophistication, and using as a measure the values that prevailed in our southern society before the Inuit themselves understood them. They have become aware of the emphasis now placed on both individual and group rights encouraged by our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.)

Fortunately, coping with the second cause of anguish should be eased, because -- on the basis of this report -- there is no evidence of a master plan, of manipulation of the Inuit families in order to carry out a project designed primarily to support sovereignty at the expense of the Inuit relocatees, or even if not at their expense, with minimal thought of incidentally improving their lot. I believe there is some consolation in the finding that the Inuit were not manipulated or deliberately misled in order to achieve a hidden goal. However, it does not

follow that the Government of Canada is absolved of all responsibility because it was not devious. Criteria for judging the conduct of the Government of Canada are discussed in the two sections that follow.

12. GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY: FIDUCIARY OBLIGATIONS

Current medical jurisprudence states that a physician who subjects a patient to risks of treatment without making effective best efforts to explain those risks to the patient is deemed not to have obtained informed consent: the physician becomes legally responsible for any of the foreseeable harmful consequences that occur.[37] The physician's liability is based on the dominant position gained through specialized knowledge that makes the patient dependent on him or her. The point about informed consent is made here by way only of analogy.[38] However, it does serve to introduce the principle that a fiduciary, in this case the Government of Canada, has high obligations of good faith, diligence and care toward its beneficiaries, the Inuit people. All the evidence available amply demonstrates, as a question of fact, that the Government assumed the dominant position of a fiduciary.

This position is also beyond doubt as a question of law. In a 1939 Supreme Court of Canada reference, the question asked was whether, under s. 91(24) of the Constitution Act,[39] "the term Indians included Eskimo inhabitants of the Province of Quebec". The opinion of Chief Justice Sir Lyman Duff, concurred in by the five other judges, was strongly affirmative.[40] Moreover, the Chief Justice noted that in December 1867, the Parliament of

Canada passed a joint address to Her Majesty requesting that northern British territories, including what is now northern Quebec, be transferred by the United Kingdom to Canada. The joint address contained the following Resolution of the Senate:

> Resolved that upon the transference of the Territories in question to the Canadian Government, it will be the duty of the Government to make adequate provisions for the protection of the Indian Tribes, whose interest and well being are involved in the transfer.[41] [emphasis added]

The 1867 Resolution of the Senate, and the 1939 reference opinion of the Supreme Court firmly establish the Government's jurisdiction and the fiduciary nature of its obligations toward the Inuit. General recognition of these obligations was confirmed in Regina v. Sparrow,[42] a recent decision of our Supreme Court, with respect to interpreting s. 35 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. S. 35 states:

(1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.
(2) In this Act, "aboriginal people of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada. [emphasis added]

Speaking for the Court, Dickson, C.J. and La Forest, J., observed:

> ... [two earlier decisions] ground a general guiding principle for s. 35(1). That is, the government has a responsibility to act in a fiduciary capacity with respect to aboriginal peoples. The relationship between the government and aboriginals is trust-like, rather than adversarial, and contemporary recognition and affirmation of aboriginal rights must be defined in the light of this historic relationship.[43] [emphasis added]

The duties of a fiduciary are of two types: first it must act in good faith in the best interest of the beneficiaries; second it must also exercise reasonable diligence and care when acting on their behalf. Consequently the fiduciary is responsible

for harms done to the beneficiaries when those harms should have been foreseen and avoided. As noted by the Court, these responsibilities are very long standing, and they were evident in the continuing conduct of the Government in the 1950s.

13. PRESENT-DAY CRITERIA FOR JUDGING CONDUCT IN THE 1950s

(a) The Nature of the Problem

The events that are the subject of this investigation took place in the 1950s, the planning having begun during the winter of 1952, almost 39 years ago. What standards are appropriate for making judgments about the actions of the Canadian Government so long ago? It might be tempting to say that we cannot today insert ourselves into a completely different "mind set", that hindsight, especially after all these years, is much easier than foresight, and therefore, that we cannot presume to stand in judgment at all. I do not believe we can take that easy way out.

On the other hand, we cannot simply judge conduct of the 1950s by an uncompromising application of current awareness and sensibility. We must look for evidence of the level of sensitivity to the issues, as found in the material available to us from those years, and to interpret the evidence cautiously -- but not overly cautiously.

(b) Shorter Term Risks: Evidence of Awareness

Interviews with civil servants and members of the RCMP, and documents examined earlier in this report, disclose awareness of a number of elements that could have been foreseen to cause early difficulties and unhappiness for the relocated families.

1. There was concern that the Inuit families be properly equipped for the High Arctic conditions -- the RCAF expressed particular worry about adequate housing in the Resolute Bay area; there was a largely ineffective attempt to prepare them for the winter darkness, as acknowledged in subsequent reports; there was awareness of the radically different hunting conditions -- the reason for making sure that Pond Inlet families joined the new settlements. In addition, the repeated references to the project as an experiment in effect recognized that it might fail: there might be inadequate reserves of game, or the southern Inuit might not be able to adapt to the unfamiliar, dramatically different environment.

2. Well before the relocation project had been planned, the Government had acknowledged a continuing need for Inuit schooling and medical care through nursing stations; both had been made available at Inukjuak for several years. The only reason for ignoring these essentials in planning the High Arctic relocation appeared to have been an unwillingness to undertake expenditures (since such services could not be covered by a repayable loan), justified perhaps, by a desire to return the Inuit to their traditional (more primitive) way of life.

3. Finally, as noted earlier in this report, there was also a contrary view to that of returning the Inuit to traditional ways; it recognized that irreversible changes in the Arctic meant that the Inuit would have to be helped to adapt in order to minimize the harmful effects of change. It asserted that the Inuit seemed to have lost power over their own lives through the changes

brought by the southerners, and they needed to regain that power. This view was held not by just a few individuals toiling in the field but was acknowledged at the highest level of government: in an article entitled, "Canada and our Eskimos", in the March 1955, issue of the Beaver, the Honourable Jean Lesage, then Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, acknowledged that "we" had upset the balance of nature in the Arctic, and stated:

> It is not enough to cure disease, the cause of disease must be removed and this is largely a matter of education and improvement of economic conditions... A new social order is supplanting the primitive life of the Eskimos. In the new order, however, direction is given by the various white men on the scene. The Eskimo inevitably tends to lose initiative individually and collectively in such a regime. It seems obvious that an effort to place direction of local affairs in the hands of the Eskimo is desirable... The northern service officers... are being instructed to encourage the Eskimos to take responsibility for local decisions to as great an extent as possible.[44] [emphasis added]

Nevertheless, in implementing their plan, the civil servants knew, or should reasonably have known, that the Inuit did not appreciate the risks. In my opinion, to ask people to make essential decisions about their future without adequate information is to deny them freedom to choose: to persuade the Inuit to participate in the relocation project, entailing risks of which they were unaware, was to diminish substantially their power to make decisions over their own lives. It was directly contrary to the intent of the statement made by Jean Lesage, quoted above.

(c) Judging Conduct in the Light of Known Risks

Although representatives of the Government of Canada intended the relocation to be for the benefit of the Inuit, there were a number of ascertainable risks involved in the operation. These were risks which, if they materialized, would be at the expense

of the Inuit -- the consequences of inadequate equipment and housing, the problems of adapting to a harsh climate with a three-month dark period and virtually no vegetation. The Government was also prepared to resettle the Inuit without making schooling available and with drastically reduced medical care.

In my opinion, the observations made in subsection (b) above, are sufficient to establish that: the government ought to have been aware of a number of the risks it took in proceeding with the relocation; and under its fiduciary obligations it bears a substantial responsibility for the adverse consequences to the Inuit involved in the project.

(d) Longer Term Risks

As I have noted in section 9, "The Cultural Gap", and again in section 11, "Long Term Effects", the separation of families from their kin and the environment in which they grew up has had the greatest impact on the relocated families. The letter of RCMP Inspector Larsen, at page 15 of this report, shows an awareness of the problems of separation. In referring to the Teletype promise that "Families will be brought back home at the end of one year if they so desire", he noted the:

> sad experiences of those families... who were taken from Cape Dorset to Dundas Harbour in 1934... and then to Arctic Bay and Fort Ross. They suffered hardships and asked, from time to time to be taken back to Cape Dorset. They never were taken back and the survivors and their descendants are still in the Fort Ross - Spence Bay District...

The point made here by Inspector Larsen must have been known within senior ranks of the civil service in Ottawa. Whether they appreciated in detail the nature of the "hardships" is not material to the main point: they were aware of a prior relocation

and the unfortunate consequences of not returning the Inuit to their earlier home; thus they knew there were risks for the Inuit who were to be relocated. Indeed, Inspector Larsen used the earlier experience to justify the promise to return the Inuit to Inukjuak. Despite the Dundas Harbour relocation failure in the 1930s, the Government made no arrangements to honour the 1953 promise. In these circumstances, a fiduciary cannot reasonably claim to be unaware of its responsibilities to the beneficiaries.

14. CONCLUSIONS, CONSEQUENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Conclusions and Consequences

I find that:

1. With regard to the sovereignty issue, in the early 1950s, the Government of Canada had concerns about effective occupation of the Canadian Arctic, primarily because of increasing activity and numbers of United States armed services personnel in the region, but also because of long-term hunting visits of Greenland Inuit to Ellesmere Island. The combination of these elements was likely to have influenced the planned location of two settlements on Ellesmere Island.

   The fact that one location -- where the Greenlanders crossed over to Ellesmere Island -- was quickly abandoned because of ice conditions during the voyage to Alexandra Fiord, however, suggests that sovereignty was not a primary concern. Nevertheless, the establishment of two permanent Inuit settlements in the High Arctic was viewed by the Government of Canada as reinforcing and contributing in a

material way to Canada's claims of sovereignty over its Arctic territories.

2. It is firmly established, first by the Canadian Senate in 1867, and subsequently by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1939 and again in 1990, that the Government of Canada from its founding has owed and continues to owe duties of good faith and diligence toward the Inuit people of Canada.

3. The Government of Canada:

(a) Promised the Inuit that if they so wished, they would be returned to the region of Inukjuak in northern Quebec, at most within three years after the relocation in 1953;

(b) Failed to meet its fiduciary duties of care and diligence in planning and carrying out the relocation, and in not taking steps in the first few years to honour its promise of return.

4. In those years, the Inuit relocatees of 1953 suffered unnecessary hardship, particularly in the first year -- as did to a lesser extent the relocatees in 1955 -- caused by inadequate planning and implementation of the project.

5. Their hardship was aggravated by the long delays and difficulties many of the first generation relocatees encountered in finding their way back to Inukjuak. The delays resulted in long-distance separation of different generations of the same family.

(b) <u>Recommendations</u>

1. Based on the documentary evidence between 1953 and 1960, the Government of Canada should accept that its predecessor

Government of those years considered the presence of new Inuit communities in the High Arctic to be helpful in supporting Canadian claims to territorial sovereignty in the region. I recommend that the Government formally acknowledge the contribution of the Inuit relocatees at Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay to Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic and publicly thank them.

2. The Government should apologize for the shortcomings in planning the relocation, particularly with respect to providing adequate equipment and housing for the first winter, and in failing to provide schools and nursing facilities in the early years.

3. The Government should acknowledge that it promised those Inuit who wished to go back to northern Quebec the opportunity to do so within, at most, three years of being relocated. It should admit that it made no serious efforts to honour its promise, and that as a consequence a substantial number who wished to return were unable to do so for many years. Accordingly, it should recognize its responsibility for that failure and for the unhappy consequences for many Inuit families.

By recognizing these failures and their unfortunate consequences for the relocated Inuit families, the Government will have gone a long way toward redressing the deep feelings of grievance felt by many Inuit; it will demonstrate a new sensitivity to their culture and values, and encourage mutual respect.

There remains the continuing anguish caused by separation between, on the one hand, the original families remaining in Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay -- especially the generation who grew up there in the 1950s to 1970s -- and, on the other hand, those portions of their families that have returned to Inukjuak. I do not know of a solution that will undo the effects of separation. At best, any solution will resolve only part of the problem. I propose the following as a fair and feasible resolution:

4. (a) Any members of the original relocated families and their immediate children should retain a choice to be relocated to Inukjuak for a specified period of time, let us say, five years from the filing of this report. The Government should commit itself to return them to Inukjuak at Government expense, including reasonable allowance for transporting their belongings. For those belongings that are impractical to transport, the government will accept possession of them and pay fair compensation. With adequate notice, (say, one clear year) the Government will undertake to provide housing in Inukjuak equivalent to the housing left behind in the High Arctic.

(b) Children of the original relocated families who choose to remain in the High Arctic after their parents have returned to Inukjuak, may visit their parents, accompanied by their own minor children still living with them, using return air transportation at Government expense, every second year during the lifetime of their parents.

Any original relocatees still in the High Arctic who, I believe, are all now in their late fifties or older, will thus have the choice of returning permanently to Inukjuak. Their children, still in Grise Fiord or Resolute Bay will also have five years to decide whether to return. If they remain in the High Arctic they will be able to visit their parents every two years at Government expense.

There is no way to undo completely the consequences of separation, but as we move to a third generation, the bonds of family must weaken, especially for grand children who have had much less contact with grandparents over the years; the communities must get on with their separate communal lives. Accordingly, when the generation of original relocatees comes to an end, for practical purposes, so will the consequences of the relocation. So long as future decisions about relocating are left entirely in the hands of Inuit families, all that can practically be done will have been done.

NOTE: The Inuit communities of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay are well organized and the proposed agreement could easily be brought to the attention of all residents. All families and individuals who would qualify either for relocation to Inukjuak or for biennial visits there, could register with the hamlet council, stating their current family position and their decision -- if and when they reach decision during the five-year period.

I have not recommended setting up a fund to pay for transportation, because the numbers remain unknown. However, the annual liability for the Government of Canada is not unlimited: the

number of original families remaining in the High Arctic can be ascertained without difficulty. If numbers warranted, one or at most two charter flights per year from Resolute Bay could likely meet all demand. From Grise Fiord, several shuttle flights to Resolute Bay might be required.

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1 Any generalizations in this report are the result of my overall judgments, based on extensive interviews with Inuit, civil servants and visitors to the High Arctic and on reviews of a large and diverse number of documents.

The more detailed assertions are based on specific statements made in interviews and/or on information found in one or more documents. Whenever this report contains a direct quote, I shall cite the source. In other cases, however, in order to keep this report within a reasonable length, sources will not necessarily be cited but will be available from me should the need arise.

2 The earliest found reference to the planned relocation is in a letter dated February 11, 1952, from Major General H.A. Young, Deputy Minister, Dept. of Resources & Development, to Brigadier L.H. Nicholson, Commissioner, RCMP. It states:

> "We have been considering, for some time, the feasibility of transferring Eskimos to Arctic islands from other over-populated areas."

3 This area is variously referred to as Cape Herschel, Cape Sabine, Bache Peninsula and Twin Glaciers.

4 Richard Diubaldo, <u>The Government of Canada and the Inuit 1900 - 1967</u>, p. 107. A study for the Research Branch, Corporate Policy, Indian and Northern Affairs, 1985.

5 Government reports refer to the fact that there were 11 or more relocations of Inuit and northern Indian populations during the period.

6 It is generally accepted that the increase in population was the result of modest improvements in basic hygiene and health care quickly adopted by the Inuit, factors which decreased their infant mortality rate and increased life expectancy.

7 The evidence of depleted game resources is mixed. In the RCMP Port Harrison Detachment Annual Report for 1952, dated March 9, 1953, Corporal A.A. Webster stated:

"During the present winter white foxes are building up to a peak which is expected to be reached next year. The H.B.C. have forecast a return of 1500 white foxes and to date the return is up to expectations... The winter has been mild... and... has enabled the natives to procure a higher than average amount of seal meat throughout most of the winter. These factors have resulted in a marked decrease in relief issues... Very little government relief is being issued..."

Nevertheless, he continued:

"... their economy is still unsound... the population of this area appears to be too great for the available resources."

8 A good example occurred in a letter dated August 15, 1956, from A/Chief, Arctic Division, J.P. Richards, replying to an inquiry from L.M. Forbes, Editor Scott Polar Research Institute, U.K.:

"With regard to the future, modern transportation... and... installations... have had the effect of opening up the Canadian Arctic... It is no longer possible to treat the Eskimos as an isolated group, and it is necessary to ensure that steps are taken to prepare them to take their place in the changing Arctic, eventually to be assimilated into the new economy which is developing. For many of the Eskimos the new life is completely replacing the old. For the majority, however, the present is a transition stage, and this also applies to the group recently moved to Resolute Bay."

9 That this concern was a serious one is shown by the fact that the Advisory Committee on Northern Development in 1948 commissioned a secret study by a distinguished constitutional and international law expert, Dean Vincent C. MacDonald of the Dalhousie Law School. The study, "Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic" was completed and submitted by the Deputy Minister of Resources and Development, H.L. Keenleyside, to General A.G.L. McNaughton, Chairman, Canadian Section of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, in February 1950.

10 In a January 26, 1953 letter from J.W. Pickersgill, Secretary to the Cabinet, to Major General H.A. Young, regarding Canadian concerns over a large U.S. presence, he stated that it was "an urgent priority to study the Arctic".

11 A letter, dated February 11, 1952, from Brigadier L.H. Nicholson, Commissioner, RCMP, to Major General H.A. Young, Deputy Minister, Dept. of Resources & Development, states:

"We have been giving some consideration to moving our Craig Harbour Detachment next year to a point somewhere in the vicinity of Cape Sabine [Alexandra Fiord]...

The advantages of placing our detachment across from Greenland would be that we then would have full control and supervision of Greenland Eskimos and others travelling

back and forth, and over-hunting activities they may engage in. As you already know, we had a Detachment established at Bache Peninsula in 1926 primarily for the maintenance of sovereignty. This Detachment was closed in 1933..."

12 Perhaps the statement that comes closest to such a position is made in an October 1950 report, by A. Stevenson, Officer in charge, Eastern Arctic Patrol, at page 7:

"There is no doubt that country produce is plentiful in the aforementioned regions [Dundas Harbour on Devon Island, and Bache Peninsula and Craig Harbour on Ellesmere Island] and Baffin Island Eskimos could easily live off the country. In this regard I understand that the Greenland Eskimos are hunting on Ellesmere Island and vicinity. Why not give our natives a chance to cover this country and also if it is considered necessary help improve the position regarding sovereignty rights. [emphasis added]

A second statement is found in an Eastern Arctic Patrol report of October 1952, regarding the presence of Greenland Inuit:

"If Police detachments could be maintained at both Craig Harbour and Cape Sabine..., ten or twelve Canadian Eskimo families could be transferred to Ellesmere Island and use made of the natural resources that are undoubtedly there. The occupation of the island by Canadian Eskimos will remove any excuse Greenlanders may presently have for crossing and hunting there..." [emphasis added]

13 In the minutes of a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development in Ottawa, August 10, 1953 (while the Inuit families were on board the "C.D. Howe"), at page 2, C.J. Marshall, of the Secretariat reported that B.G. Sivertz of Resources and Development:

"pointed out that the Canadian Government is anxious to have Canadians occupying as much of the Arctic as possible and it appeared that in many areas the Eskimos were the only people capable of doing this." [emphasis added]

14 Three examples:

Alex Stevenson, "Inuit Relocation -- High Arctic". Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, 1977, page 1.

"There is no doubt that sovereignty was of concern to some."

He then refers to the statement quoted in fn. 13, above, but attributed it to the "Department Director" as having been expressed in 1952.

C.M Bolger, Administrator of the Arctic,

i) Memorandum for Mr. Stevenson, October 4, 1960, "Relocation of Eskimo Groups in the High Arctic", at page 1:

"I pointed out to the director some of the problems we have had in respect supply and of medical services, and his own feeling is that while Grise Fiord should be continued for sovereignty purposes, it should not be duplicated at other isolated locations." [emphasis added]

ii) Memorandum for the Director, November 15, 1960, "Relocation of Eskimo Groups in the High Arctic", at page 3: "Although the Eskimos at Grise Fiord have not had the opportunities of employment, they have, however, obtained a good livelihood from the country and this community also serves a distinctly useful purpose in confirming in a tangible manner, Canada's sovereignty over this vast region of the Arctic." [emphasis added]

15 Wilfred Doucette, "Cape Herschel, The Post Office That never Was". Postal History Society of Canada, No. 46, (1986) page 20. Mr. Doucette was a "freelance photographer on the 'd'Iberville'" whose assignment was "to record the voyage for the Department of Transport." He states that:

"The object of the voyage was to establish Canadian sovereignty in the high Arctic... The final goal was Cape Herschel on Ellesmere Island, only 700 miles from the North Pole, to establish the northernmost RCMP post, an eskimo settlement and a post office..." [emphasis added]

16 At least two documents state a primary purpose unrelated to sovereignty:

(i) A June 15, 1953, letter from Major General H.A. Young, Deputy Minister, Dept. of Resources & Development, to Brigadier G.M. Drury, Deputy Minister of National Defence -- "primarily, our aim is to find out how Eskimos from southern areas can adapt themselves to conditions in the high Arctic..."

(ii) an August 4, 1953 "Memorandum for Mr. C.W. Jackson" from F.J.G. Cunningham, Director -- "Our primary object is to find out how Eskimos from overpopulated southern areas can adapt themselves to conditions in the High Arctic"

17 F. Ross Gibson, who was the RCMP constable that visited the camps states that he does not recall conveying such a promise to the Inuit families. However, he acknowledges that they may have learned of it from others who visited the area, such as A. Stevenson.

18 Memorandum for the Director, October 13, 1953 by J. Cantley, Arctic Services, Dept. of Resources and Development, at pages 2 and 3.

19 Memorandum for the Director, October 22nd, 1956, by B.G. Sivertz, Chief, Arctic Division.

20 The August 21, 1954, "Annual Report of Game Conditions, Craig Harbour Detachment Area", by Cpl. G.K. Sargent, less then 12 months after relocation, stated:

"It is the writer's opinion that with the establishment of the small native camp on Lindstrom Peninsula approximately

forty-five miles west of Craig Harbour that it is the first time the game resources of this area have really been tested. Previously with only the R.C.M.P. Detachment here only a small amount of game could be observed and would be taken by personnel and native specials concerned. Also as more native men would be travelling around more game has been observed." [emphasis added]

21 Among other correspondence to the same effect, the following quote from a memorandum for the Director, National Parks Branch, dated June 19, 1956, from F.J.G. Cunningham, shows that there was a substantial awareness of the problem:

"I certainly agree with you that if further moves of Eskimos are contemplated for any reason, early planning should involve careful investigation of the wildlife resources upon which these people would depend."

22 Air Commodore R.C. Ripley, Air Officer Commanding, RCAF Air Transport Command, expressed deep concern about the planning in a letter dated July 6, 1953, to The Chief of Air Staff. Among other concerns, he notes:

"No mention is made of housing or support of the Eskimos... They must have a properly balanced diet, clean healthy living accommodation and proper clothing, which will have to be supplied to them.

I am very much against the proposed program, except if...(a) [proper schooling is arranged];
(b) [they are] housed in properly constructed homes."

23 E.M. Hinds, School House in the Arctic. London: Wyman & Sons, 1958, p. 161.

24 In his report of October 14, 1953, Constable Gibson wrote:

"A building approximately thirty feet long, sixteen feet wide and seven feet high has been constructed at the camp site by the natives assisted by the writer. The material... obtained from the Ionosphere Station [here]... was formerly packing boxes... This building will be used this coming winter as a community centre where the natives will be able to dry pelts and clothing as well as using it for a work shop and church. The writer intends... to instruct the native children in simple schooling and to keep the camp active as the Port Harrison Natives have never experienced a dark period."

25 That the RCMP was aware of the harshness of the first winter is confirmed in a letter by Insp. W.J. Fitzsimmons, dated September 21, 1956, to The Director, Northern Administration and Lands Branch. It was about building materials for several "Eskimo houses", delivered to Resolute Bay in the fall of 1956 but lost for one year at the air base. The Inspector reported that Constable Gibson advised:

"... if the buildings were considered for occupancy by Eskimos that the first four families that proceeded to

> Resolute Bay should be given the first consideration, as it was they who suffered the first winter in snow houses and had the real problem of adjusting to the new surroundings." [emphasis added]

In a letter of July 11, 1958, Supt. H.A. Larsen, RCMP Officer Commanding "G" Division, wrote to the Director, Northern Administration and Lands Branch, referred to a tape recording by Constable Gibson and noted:

> "... some were of great interest, especially the narration by Cst. GIBSON of the landing of the Eskimos at Resolute Bay in 1953, and the many difficulties experienced during the first winter owing to a lack of supplies and inadequate equipment." [emphasis added]

26 I understand that there is a four-year cycle: after a year of plenty, the crop drops quite precipitously and rises gradually over the following four years to a new peak.

27 During the first year of the relocation, the level of confusion was probably quite high, as is illustrated in a lengthy letter from F.J.G. Cunningham, Director, dated November 23, 1954, to Superintendent H.A. Larsen, discussing discrepancies in the accounts kept at Resolute Bay during that time.

28 In a letter of April 20, 1960, he stated:

> "... there is a considerable difference in the amount of money the Eskimos receive for furs and the resale value outside.
>
> For example, during the 1958/59 trapping season the Eskimos received the following [for their furs]... $6140
>
> Grise Fiord reports that the above furs were sold at auction for $17,953.65... There is a difference here of $11,813.65 that does not appear to have been refunded to the trappers...
>
> No figures on the prices received from auction sales for previous years are available, however, the writer has never heard of the difference being refunded to the trappers."

I am not aware of a reply to Constable Warner's concerns, nor do I know whether there was a change in policy.

29 The following excerpt from a letter, dated July 15, 1960 from RCMP A/Supt. W.G. Fraser, Officer Commanding "G" Division, to the constables in charge of the Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay detachments, helps to explain the embarrassment:

> "In the past, concern has been expressed because the profit from the annual operation of the Eskimo Trading Stores has not been returned to the Eskimos. We now understand that this cannot be done because of the unusual circumstances whereby the Trading Stores were established.

When the Co-operative Trading Stores are established at the end of this year, it will mean that the profits from the store operation will be returned to the Eskimos trading in the store in proportion to the amount of their business. Under this new set-up it is also proposed to keep track of each trapper's fur catch and the profit made, over and above the credit given to the Eskimo at the time his fur is turned in to the Trading Store, will be returned eventually to the individual trapper... [emphasis added]

The accumulated reserves were transferred to the co-operatives to get their operations underway.

30 He stated:

"I get the impression that AMAGOOALIK and his wife do not actually receive their wages either in cash or in goods from the Eskimo trading store but that the whole of their wages goes to your Department to help pay off the Eskimo Traders' Loan Account. If I have the wrong impression may I please be advised accordingly. I would say that the individual Eskimo... should be credited with the appropriate amount, to be drawn by him as and when he so desires." [emphasis added]

31 Perhaps what is meant is that when goods originally purchased with loan funds and still in the stores were sold for a credit earned by an Inuit wage earner, his payment credit would then be returned to the Government to reduce the loan. However, this interpretation would not apply when replacement goods were purchased.

32 E.M. Hinds, "Welfare Teacher's Report", September 1951. Pages 1 and 2.

33 A letter, dated June 18, 1953, from C.K. LeCapelain, Acting Director, Arctic Division, to A. Watson, Marine Superintendent, Department of Transport, states:

"As requested by your Mr. Hall, I am attaching hereto a list of the Eskimos to be transferred on board both the CGS "C.D. HOWE" and the CGS "d'IBERVILLE".

The destination of a number of these natives is not known at the present time. However Captain Fournier and the Chief Steward will be advised sometime during the course of the voyage." [emphasis added]

Minutes of a Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development, by C.J. Marshall of the Secretariat, held on August 10, 1953, while the "C.D. Howe" was en route from Inukjuak to Craig Harbour, record:

"S/L O'Neil [R.C.A.F.]... asked how many families would be going to each of the three settlement areas. Mr. Cantley [Resources and Development] stated that this would be decided on the boat taking the Eskimos to their destination. It was not desirable to break up family groups if possible." [emphasis added]

34 Of course, if their return to Inukjuak somehow did not work out -- there was bound to be some uncertainty after an absence of, say two years -- they were reminded that they would have to remain there a further year until the supply ship could take them back to the High Arctic.

35 However, the RCMP officers were not oblivious to the question of some Inuits' interest in returning to their former homes. Corporal G.R. Sargent, in command of the Craig Harbour Detachment in 1955, stated in his end-of-year report, at page 3:

> "There has been no definite word from any native families to return to their native land. However it is expected that possibly native family AKPALEEPIK will wish to return to POND INLET in 1957. Last year he requested that his brother and family come to CRAIG HARBOUR and as same did not arrive he may wish to return to them... One tentative request has been put forward by a HARRISON family JOATAMIE to have the mother of his wife come to CRAIG HARBOUR, providing she is still a widow and has not acquired a new husband. When it is definitely known what these natives want a further report will be submitted." [emphasis added]

Constable F.R. Gibson of Resolute Bay Detachment, stated in his November 14, 1956 report, at page 1:

> "To date the present natives have enjoyed the virgin country surrounding Resolute Bay and have grown to be a part of it taking pride in their every undertaking. They do however from time to time express their desire to return to friends and relations at Port Harrison. They wish only to return for one year. The writer believes they were promised by the Department they could return at the end of a given time. Rather than increase the population for the time being a rotation program could be brought into effect by letting those who wish to return to Port Harrison and have them replaced at Resolute by other keen and interested settlers. This rotation would not need to be compulsory. [emphasis added]

Alex Stevenson, "Inuit Relocation -- High Arctic". Indian and Northern Affairs, 1977, at page 4, states:

> "In the early years, as this was an experiment, the understanding was, should it fail or the Harrison people wished to return to their original homes, they could do so. There were rumours from time to time in the first seven years that there were some dissatisfied or were homesick but this was never confirmed or were there any approaches on record having been made to officials of the Federal or Territorial Governments. In this regard, there was also from a sociological point of view some expressions being made that the Baffin Islanders were not interested or avoided interrelation with the Port Harrison people. Here again there is nothing on file to confirm this." [emphasis added]

Stevenson's last two remarks about records show that he was not informed about every important aspect of the relocation. I have already noted that local RCMP detachments were aware of Inuit concerns about returning. In addition, the source cited in the next footnote, contradicts the absence of written communication of some Inuits' wish to return. And as already noted, there is substantial, generally accepted evidence that the Pond Inlet and Inukjuak peoples did not mix well.

36 Source: interview on October 18, 1991, with Roda Inuksuk, a former president of the Inuit Taparisat of Canada, who is in the process of translating, from syllabic form of Inuktitut into English, a large number of letters from people in Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Resolute Bay and Inukjuak. In particular, she is now working on letters written from 1958 to 1963, by residents of Resolute Bay to translators Robert Williamson and Elijah Iqlout, intended for the Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs or to the Department.

The letters contain a series of continuing requests to be returned to Inukjuak or to have their relatives from there join them in Resolute Bay. They speak of family dislocation, concern about the local environment and about teen-age children going south for schooling. She quoted from one letter from an older man:

> "How do we get our message across without hurting anyone, show appreciation for what was done without showing too much our dissatisfaction? We must not hurt or upset them [our local RCMP officers] because without their assistance, money and approval for transport, there is no way to get back."

This letter encapsulates both the cultural desire to avoid conflict and the awe, even fear, of authority.

37 A leading case is Reibl v. Hughes (1980), 114 D.L.R. (3d) 1. See also, G. Robertson, "Informed Consent Ten Years Later: The Impact of Reibl v. Hughes", 70 Can. B. Rev. 423 (1991).

38 In any event, the doctrine of informed consent had not been fully developed in tort law in the 1950s, when the relocation took place.

39 S. 91 sets out most of the legislative powers of the Government of Canada. Its "exclusive legislative authority" extends, by virtue of Subsection 24, to "Indians, and Lands reserved for Indians."

40 Reference re Eskimos, [1939] S.C.R. 104, at 106:

> "It is indisputable that in the census [prepared by a Committee of the U.K. Parliament in 1857] and in the map the 'Esquimaux' fall under the general designation 'Indians' and that, indeed, in these documents, 'Indians' is used as synonymous with 'aborigines'."

41 Ibid, at 108.

42 [1990] 1 S.C.R. 1075

43 Ibid, at 1108.

44 This article is quoted by Richard Diubaldo. He observed that it was a "carefully worded article, crafted by members of his department... and was tantamount to a policy statement". Op.cit. p. 114.